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Letter dated 11 March 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith Open Announcement No. 2 issued on 23 February 2011 by the Inspection Group of the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the truth behind the Yonphyong Island shelling (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sin Son Ho
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Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 11 March 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The truth behind the Yonphyong Island shelling

Open Announcement No. 2 issued on 23 February 2011 in Pyongyang by the Inspection Group of the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the truth behind the Yonphyong Island shelling

The Inspection Group of the National Defence Commission (NDC) of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the first instalment of the statement issued on 2 November 2010 scientifically and fairly disclosed before the world that the sunk *Cheonan* ship case was the most hideous conspiratorial case in the history of the nation faked up by the United States and the south Korean group of traitors.

In the subsequent period, experts from south Korea conducted 11 tests, including a precision analysis of the process of formation of adsorbent on the hull of the ship and torpedo parts with the help of a scanning tunnelling microscope. These tests led to flatly refuting the investigation results presented by south Korea.

Shell pieces on which flower-shaped white substances are attached were found in the propelling body of the torpedo, which was produced as overwhelming evidence proving the ship sinking. This proved that the propelling body had long been under water, not for one to two months. The puppet Defence Ministry hastily removed the shell pieces only to become people's laughing stock.

An officer who had been hired for a search operation in the waters where the incident took place was proved to have met death during the rescue operation of a United States submarine, increasing the suspicions about the clash between *Cheonan* and the United States submarine. More facts are being brought to light to probe the truth behind the above-mentioned charade.

It has already been known that more than 70 per cent of the south Koreans said they were sceptical about the "story about the north's involvement in the *Cheonan* case", while the rest do not believe it or remain doubtful about it.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea proposed that the United States and south Korea conduct a joint investigation into the case after bringing relevant evidence to Panmunjom if they cannot receive the Inspection Group of the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. But they have not yet responded to this bold and magnanimous proposal. Even a mere child can guess their ulterior motive.

However, the group of traitors of south Korea is making farfetched assertions in a bid to exploit the already-bankrupt *Cheonan* case for escalating confrontation with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This group is making futile efforts to shift the blame for the Yonphyong Island shelling on to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

South Korea's delegates walked out of the conference room in the eyes of the north side's delegates when preliminary talks for the high-ranking north-south

military talks were held on 8 and 9 February. But the south side floated the misinformation that the north side's delegates unilaterally walked out of the conference room. It is clear from this fact that the above-mentioned group may cook up whatever it likes.

The Yonphyong Island shelling was a planned provocation aimed to trigger a direct military clash against the Korean People's Army through a reckless pre-emptive attack. Through this the group sought to play down its crime and push north-south relations to the brink of war as the *Cheonan* case was branded as a hideous conspiratorial case, making it impossible for it to escape the bitter domestic and foreign public accusation and denunciation.

The *Cheonan* case was the initial provocation to put overall military pressure on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in conspiracy with foreign forces while the Yonphyong shelling was the second planned provocation to ignite a war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The south Korean group of traitors recorded last year as a year of confrontation and conflict. In the new year, too, it is free to let loose a whole string of reckless remarks falsifying truth, persistently using the two cases for stoking confrontation between fellow countrymen. Under this situation, the Inspection Group of the National Defence Commission decided to disclose the truth behind the Yonphyong Island shelling.

1. Truth behind the Yonphyong Island shelling

Yonphyong Island in the West Sea of Korea covers 6.8 square kilometres and its circumference is about 18 kilometres.

This small island has been widely known for the diversity of fishes and their abundance and become an object of envy by foreigners. This island, however, has turned into an advance base for aggression against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as huge marine corps and artillery forces are deployed by the south Korean puppet warmongers.

After amassing huge strike means on five islands in the West Sea of Korea, including Yonphyong Island, south Korea watched for an opportunity of provocation while working out a firing plan of artillery pieces and flying corps of the puppet army for the defence of the "northern limit line". But it could not put it into practice in face of the toughest stand taken by the army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and strong public opinion inside and outside Korea.

On 22 November 2010 when Hoguk exercises targeted against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were at their height across south Korea, the puppet Joint Chiefs of Staff crafted a plan to bombard the territorial waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side on 23 and 24 November from waters off Yonphyong Island.

The army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, prompted by its hope to avert a military conflict in the sensitive waters and preserve peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, sent a telephone message to the puppet military at 8:00 on 23 November.

The message called for immediate cancelling of the reckless plan for shelling the territorial waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side. It also

warned in strong terms that in case south Korea defies this, it will face a resolute physical counter-attack by the army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and that it will be held wholly responsible for all the ensuing consequences.

South Korea, however, opened fire at the territorial waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by mobilizing artillery pieces deployed on Yonphyong Island.

Yonphyong Island, once home to peaceable inhabitants, thus turned into a base for pre-emptive military provocation and could not escape a deserved punishment.

The merciless physical counter-attack on the positions of the puppet army on the island proved once again that the strong revolutionary army of Mount Paektu did not make an empty declaration when it said that it would never pardon anyone intruding even a bit into the territorial waters and air and territory of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea over which its sovereignty is exercised.

There is no house owner who will allow a robber to go on a rampage and no army of any country who will allow warmongers to make a pre-emptive attack on its inviolable territorial waters.

It was due to the group of traitors keen on confrontation with fellow countrymen that peaceful waters turned into a theatre of military conflict all of a sudden.

Fortunately, more than 1,300 islanders remained unhurt because they all went to the seaside opposite the firing positions to gather shellfish.

The warmongers, however, were so sordid as to try to beat back the counter-strike by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by using the inhabitants as "human shields". They did not even inform the inhabitants of the warning message from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

As for "civilian casualties", they were a few civilians enlisted in the armed forces. They were in the barracks of the puppet army. Had they not entered the barracks, they would not have met death.

Far from drawing a due lesson from its piteous plight, the group of traitors opted to expand the shelling, crying out for so-called "retaliation" and "punishment".

The group of traitors carried out a massive replacement of military brass hats including the defence minister with hawkish guys and bolstered huge troops of the three services in and around Yonphyong Island. After clamping an emergency alert, they fired bullets and shells from the area of the Island for more than one hour on 20 December 2010.

They secretly changed the waters and targets to be shelled for fear of the second and third counter-strike by the army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They also used the shells that had been left unused during the island shelling incident a month ago.

The army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea did not feel any need to respond to this clumsy firing conducted by the coward military for a propaganda purpose to save its face.

Had the group of traitors fired even a shell on the territorial waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side, not only those islands from which shells were fired but also Seoul would have turned into a sea of fire.

2. Yonphyong Island shelling: extension of systematic provocation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The Yonphyong Island shelling was an extension of the military provocations that have been systematically escalated up to this date since the publication of the Korean Armistice Agreement in 1953.

After sustaining a bitter defeat in the three-year war aimed to stifle the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in its cradle, the puppet group of south Korea flatly denied the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement and worked in every way to scrap and render it invalid while crying out for "separate northward advance".

These moves were vividly proved by its acts in waters around the five islands in the West Sea, on which a maritime military demarcation line was not set at the time of concluding the Armistice Agreement. These islands are geographically close to the coast of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side.

South Korea tried hard to put its plan of "separate northward advance" into practice while committing abduction and murder of peaceable fishermen, armed attacked on the area of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side and other crimes, using the waters around the islands as a springboard.

The military provocations in waters of the West Sea of Korea and other areas were handled as the top agenda item at a meeting of the Military Armistice Commission after the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement. This proves the gravity of the military provocations in these waters at that time.

Due to the south Korean puppet army, the waters in the West Sea turned into an advance base for the provocation of a war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and dispute-ridden waters fraught with the constant danger of confrontation and conflict between the north and the south.

South Korea escalated military provocations in the waters even in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, in the wake of the 1950s. In the 1990s, they developed into military conflicts too dangerous to put under control.

An example of this was the first West Sea skirmish in June 1999.

At that time, the war of the United States and its allies against Yugoslavia was drawing to an end. South Korea set the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a target and the West Sea as an ignition point for the second Korean war. Then it buckled down to carrying out the "operational plan to provoke the north".

The puppet warmongers of south Korea amassed two large destroyers, 20 clippers, more than 40 combatant ships of various types, including tank landing ships, guard ships, supply ships, rescue ships as well as marine corps in waters around Yonphyong Island. They recklessly pre-empted firing at the ships of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side on routine guard duties.

After failing to make the first West Sea skirmish an ignition point for an all-out war, the puppet military warmongers sparked off the second armed conflict in

the waters in 2002 when the hot wind of reconciliation and unity swept the peninsula more furiously than before.

In the subsequent period, the puppet forces annually escalated the intrusions into the maritime guard line of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side in a planned way and triggered the third West Sea skirmish in 2009, only to disclose that they sought to use the waters around Yonphyong Island as an advance base for provoking a war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

After the Lee Myung-bak group of traitors came to power, the number of intrusions into the territorial waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side sharply increased. Last year alone, it infiltrated ships into them on over 600 occasions under the pretext of "intercepting fishing boats" or coping with the routine operation of the ships of the navy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

All the facts prove that the Yonphyong Island shelling was by no means an accidental case but a product of protracted confrontation with fellow countrymen incited by the successive puppet warmongers and a direct revelation of the systematic extension of their military provocations.

3. Criminal aim sought by group of traitors through Yonphyong Island shelling

The Yonphyong Island shelling perpetrated by the south Korean group of traitors was a grave military provocation committed as an extension of the *Cheonan* case.

The case faked up by the group by sacrificing innocent soldiers for confrontation with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 26 March 2010 turned out to be more unfavourable to the group as the days go by. The "results of investigation", announced by it twice to prove that the case "was linked with the north", were full of doubts, sparking off bitterer ridicule and criticism at home and abroad.

The first instalment of the statement issued by the Inspection Group of the National Defence Commission revealing the truth behind the *Cheonan* case in the eyes of the world brought into bold relief the true colours of the tricksters who faked up the case. The United States and the group of traitors found no word to refute it. The tricksters worked hard to seek a way to tide over the unfavourable situation.

The "bright idea" that came to the minds of the United States and the group of traitors was to fire shells into the waters under Democratic People's Republic of Korea control in a bid to induce its army to take a countermeasure and drive north-south relations to the brink of war.

To this end, the south Korean group of traitors fired bullets and shells into the waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side despite its repeated strong warnings.

The Lee Myung-bak group of traitors sought a sinister aim in committing shelling from Yonphyong Island.

The shelling was aimed to persistently maintain its stand of preserving the illegal "northern limit line", first of all.

It is well known to the world that the "northern limit line" is a brigandish line unilaterally drawn inside the inviolable waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by the United States imperialist aggression forces present in south Korea under the berets of the "United Nations forces".

The United States imperialists felt extremely tired after sustaining an unprecedented defeat in the Korean War in July 1953. They let Clark, the then commander of the "United Nations forces", set the northern limit line, the so-called Clark line, in the waters of the West Sea of Korea in a bid to check traitor Syngman Rhee's reckless attempt at "separate northern expedition" and prevent a war which might reoccur according to it and, at the same time, bar south Korean fishermen from going to the northern half of Korea.

The line is the "final line for blocking the way to the north" and the "limit line for banning the sailing of boats to the north" unilaterally drawn by Clark, commander of the United States imperialist aggression forces, to meet the United States self-righteous interests.

Henry Kissinger, United States Secretary of State in 1975, referring in a diplomatic message to the illegality of the northern limit line, said that it was unilaterally set and was not accepted by north Korea. This is in wanton violation of international law as the line was unilaterally drawn in the open sea, he added.

The United States Ambassador to south Korea in December 1973 expressed deep concern by claiming that in case an incident occurs in the waters along the northern limit line, south Korea and the United States would be blamed by the majority of countries for doing wrong. As seen above, the United States and its satellites openly admitted the illegality of the line.

That was why the United States imperialists did not inform the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side about the line or make it public to the world, though many years have passed since then.

The voices ridiculing the northern limit line as a "hot potato", which is poor in logic and serious in practice, are endlessly heard from among the political, academic and public circles of south Korea, as it was unilaterally set.

Moreover, the northern limit line is quite contrary to paragraph 13 B of the Korean Armistice Agreement stipulating that the island groups of Paengyong-Do, Taechong-Do, Sochong-Do, Yonpyong-Do and U-Do shall remain under the military control of the commander of the "United Nations forces" and all other islands and waters under the military control of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side. It is in total breach of the norms of the maritime boundary stipulated by the international law of the sea, including respect for the right to 12-mile territorial waters.

Had the northern limit line been set according to the recognized legal norms and usage, the south Korean group of traitors would not have felt the need to "preserve" the line with so much effort.

The puppet forces pre-empted shelling from Yonphyong Island where the military confrontation between the north and the south remains acute though south Korea has so many islands. Their real intention was to "preserve the northern limit line" whose existence is at increasing peril day by day.

The Yonphyong Island shelling was also designed to spark off military conflicts in the West Sea of Korea in a bid to nullify the historic North-South Joint Declaration of 15 June 2000 and the declaration of 4 October, its action programme, and the precious gains common to the nation, and turn the waters into a theatre of eternal confrontation and conflict.

It is the unanimous aspiration and desire of all Koreans in the north and the south and abroad to make the waters of the West Sea of Korea peace waters and ensure the common interests and prosperity of the nation.

A lot of cases of military confrontation and clashes in the past caused painful asualties, and the economic losses and damages done to fishermen in the north and the south amounted to astronomical figures.

The adoption of the two historic declarations, the proposal for setting the special zone for peace and cooperation in the West Sea for the co-prosperity of the nations and the adoption of an agreement on providing a military guarantee for setting common fishing waters and peace waters reflected the unanimous desire of all Koreans.

But the expectation and hope of the Koreans of seeing the disputed waters in the West Sea of Korea which brought disgrace and pain to the nation turn into waters of peace and prosperity adding to the pride and joy of the nation have not been translated into reality.

No sooner had traitor Lee Myung-bak, steeped in antagonism towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, become the master of "Chongwadae" than such hideous policy for confrontation with fellow countrymen as "no nukes, opening and 3,000 dollars" was adopted as a "state policy". He began to scrap the historic north-south agreements which had already been under implementation, blustering that he would approach the north-south relations with a "ruler of pragmatism", not with a "yardstick of ideology".

The group of traitors totally turned down even the proposal for preventing military confrontation and conflict between the north and the south and ensuring the common interests and prosperity of the nation under the pretext of "sympathy of the people" and "financial burden".

It hatched a sinister plot to eliminate everything step by step after classifying the inter-Korean agreements, the precious gains common to the nation, into a category which should be implemented on a priority basis, a category to be implemented at the final phase and a category which should not be implemented. This drove the implementation of the historic declaration of 4 October to a total suspension, brought north-south relations back to those of confrontation in the era of the Cold War and turned the West Sea again into a theatre of military confrontation and conflict, an advance base for igniting a war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and a position from which to start an attack on it.

No wonder the people in south Korea, commenting on the Yonphyong Island shelling in which the military clash spilled over to the land from the sea, deplored that such a tragic incident would not have occurred if the 4 October declaration had been implemented.

The said shelling was also aimed at plugging the United States, its master, deeper into its scenario for invading the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

After setting it as the primary target to keep the United States imperialist aggression forces in south Korea for an indefinite period, traitor Lee Myung-bak of south Korea did not hesitate to commit the thrice-cursed treachery to "tighten the alliance" with the United States. But he could not settle the issue of postponing the transfer of the right to control wartime operations as he intended.

This was because, according to the south Korea-United States "summit" agreement of September 2006, the decision to hand over the right to control wartime operations to the puppet army till 17 April 2012 was officially made public at the bilateral "defence ministers talks" in February 2007.

Driven by the urgent need to create exceptional "uneasy security" for the pretext for the United States forces' permanent presence in south Korea, the group of traitors was repeatedly closeted, finally cooking up the case of the *Cheonan* warship sinking at night in territorial waters in peacetime.

The group staged big joint naval exercises one after another under that pretext and introduced the nuclear carrier flotilla of the United States imperialist aggression forces into the narrow waters of the West Sea of Korea. It then held renegotiations for postponing the transfer of the right to wartime operation control as it planned and succeeded in extending the handover time for an additional three years and seven months.

Enraged people rose up in protest against this pro-American and treacherous act across south Korea. Upset by this, the group of traitors needed the second *Cheonan* case, i.e., a shocking case to keep the "uneasy security".

The Yonphyong Island shelling was committed under a meticulous plan for this purpose.

In order to put this plan into practice, the group committed two adventurous military provocations at the time when 2010 was running out. It is misusing the case of the Yonphyong Island shelling to escalate confrontation with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the new year, too.

4. Who was behind the Yonphyong Island shelling?

When the group of traitors perpetrated shelling from the Yonphyong Island one after another despite strong protest and denunciation at home and abroad, the attention of the world was focused on every movement of the United States imperialist aggression forces present in south Korea under the mask of the "United Nations Command".

This was because the United States imperialists, the real master of the command holding the right to "control wartime operations" in south Korea and tasked to implement and oversee the Korean Armistice Agreement, zealously backed and patronized the military provocations of the puppet forces, far from preventing them.

When the group announced the plan for the second shelling from the island, pushing the situation on the Korean Peninsula to the brink of war, the United States imperialists let the command fully support the plan, terming the projected exercise one to be staged legitimately in observance of the Armistice Agreement. Moreover, they declared that they would send at least 20 persons belonging to the United

Nations forces to the island to assist the group in such fields as communications and medical care so that it would go ahead with the exercise as planned.

Lurking behind this was their sinister aim to paint any military conflict in these sensitive waters as confrontation between the army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the "United Nations Command", not anything happening between the north and the south.

The United States imperialists misled public opinion by advertising the military provocation of the group as a "legitimate shelling exercise" in a bid to make the military conflict between the two sides a fait accompli and get the United States aggression forces in south Korea fully ready to involve themselves in it.

There was no clash between the two sides as the army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea paid no heed to such vicious military provocation as taking revenge after being hard hit. But the United States imperialists staged large-scale joint naval manoeuvres after rapidly dispatching the *George Washington* nuclear carrier flotilla made up of cruisers, destroyers, nuclear submarines, landing craft, etc., dozens of carrier-based aircraft and F-15 and F-16 fighters as main forces to the narrow waters of the West Sea of Korea as they planned.

In succession they sent more than 10,000 troops of the United States imperialist aggression forces, a nuclear carrier flotilla and over 150 fighters to the waters off Okinawa in Japan to stage the largest-ever joint military exercises in coordinated operations with 34,000 troops of the "Self-Defence Forces" of Japan, 40 warships and 250 planes. They even invited south Korean puppet troops to participate in the exercises as "observers".

Timing to coincide with this, they invited top-class servants of south Korea and Japan to Washington for a confab to discuss "a joint counteraction" against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and "close cooperation".

Their military moves in the wake of the *Cheonan* case and the Yonphyong Island shelling were aimed to wind up the setting-up of the structure of military confrontation in North-east Asia under the pretext of the escalating tension on the peninsula and, furthermore, realize their wild ambition for world domination.

As already disclosed, the United States imperialists' Asia-Pacific policy is the core and mainstay of their strategy for world domination in the 21st century.

In order to realize this strategy, they are attaching great importance to the above-mentioned region where big powers are concentrated, to the Korean Peninsula, in particular, as it is of great importance geologically and strategically.

It is their judgement that it is impossible to dominate the Asian continent nor is it possible to lay a military siege to Eurasia unless the whole of Korea is put under their control. So they calculate that they can easily dominate the world if they seize the Korean Peninsula and overpower the big powers in North-east Asia.

But the reality was quite contrary to what they intended.

They ran the whole gamut of means such as economic isolation and suffocation, psychological warfare and military threat to stifle Korean-style socialism. But they suffered repeated setbacks. On the contrary, their influence and right to domination weakened in this region due to their domestic and foreign environment and crisis.

They felt the urgent need to exercise influence backed by military muscle and this required an appropriate justification.

Hence, they instigated the south Korean group of traitors to fabricate the *Cheonan* case. Later they openly allowed the group to "take counteraction by exercising the right to self-defence" and "amend the rules of belligerency". They egged the group on to perpetrate shelling from Yonphyong Island, even providing "information about the north" and giving prompt support with the latest military hardware, including F-22 Raptor fighters.

What merits particular attention in their moves after the *Cheonan* case and the Yonphyong Island shelling last year is that they are channelling all efforts into establishing the structure of military confrontation in Asia.

The moves to knock into shape a triangular military alliance involving the United States, Japan and south Korea, which had been pushed forward from long ago, are aimed to militarily dominate the region by mobilizing not only the United States imperialist aggression forces but the Special Defence Forces of Japan in case of "contingency" on the Korean Peninsula. It is their scenario to form a new military bloc in the region and expand the United States-led military blocs to the east and the west and then throughout the world.

The Asian type NATO is more dangerous than NATO, in actuality. The issue of establishing a missile defence system has not been officially stipulated in NATO and it has no operational plan for invading and occupying other countries in particular.

But the above-mentioned triangular military alliance includes the above-mentioned issue and plan. It is more aggressive and interventionist in its nature than NATO. Means and methods of operations are more specified in the alliance.

The United States imperialists staged an emergency huddle under the pretext of "taking a joint counteraction" against the Yonphyong Island incident at which they agreed with south Korea to take a counteraction by hurling puppet warmongers as a shock brigade to counter somebody's "local provocation" while providing support to them from behind and mobilizing even the Japanese reactionaries. This indicates that they are set to ignite a war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by mobilizing multinational forces.

All these facts are enough to reveal once again that the United States imperialists were behind the above-mentioned two cases.

5. Bitter lessons drawn from the Yonphyong Island shelling

The Yonphyong Island shelling that occurred owing to the United States and the south Korean group of traitors taught serious lessons to the Korean nation and other people in the world who desire the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula.

The first lesson is that it is necessary to cross off the illegal "northern limit line" and set the extension of the Military Demarcation Line in the West Sea of Korea in a fair way at an early date.

The viewpoint and stand on the "northern limit line" can serve as a touchstone distinguishing those standing for peace in the West Sea from those opposed to it.

From a military viewpoint, a curtain of bilateral military conflicts was already raised in the West Sea of Korea. Any armed clash may lead to an all-out war, seriously threatening not only the destiny of the Korean nation but also world peace.

The "northern limit line" is a ghost-like line which can convince no one because it was unilaterally drawn in a brigandish way without a bilateral agreement, to say nothing of the requirements of the international law of the sea, the principle of respecting the opponent's 12-mile territorial waters, the requirements of the Armistice Agreement and the "law of the sea" of south Korea.

No wonder, even the United States imperialists drew the north-south "imaginary boundary" in the West Sea of Korea further southward than the "northern limit line" on the basis of the principle of equidistance stipulated by the international law of the sea. At that time, they were distributing Korean maps to the participants in the United Nations conference on the Law of the Sea, which was held in the United States.

After the Yonphyong Island shelling, not only the broad international community but also Americans became increasingly vocal calling for redrawing the "northern limit line".

Selig Harrison, director of the Asia Programme of the Center for International Policy of the United States, who is an expert on Korean affairs, said that is very easy to solve the West Sea conflict between south and north of Korea. The United States has to reset the "northern limit line", an extension of the Military Demarcation Line in the sea, in the dispute-ridden area a little southward, he added. He went on to say that the United States has the right to reset the "northern limit line" as it was granted by the Security Council the right to nominate the commander of the United Nations forces in south Korea in November 1950. The Obama administration must discuss the issue of setting the new boundary in the West Sea of Korea with both sides of Korea, but must not grant the south Korean regime the right to refuse a new boundary if an agreement on it is reached, he pointed out.

The broad international community, including political, social and academic circles, is becoming increasingly assertive that the United States should come out to remove the "northern limit line".

This represents the world opinion that it is none other than the United States which should set the new boundary in the West Sea with responsibility to ensure peace in the waters of the West Sea of Korea. It is the view of the people of the world that the United States imperialists sowed the seed of armed clashes and dispute in the waters and the south Korean group of traitors abused it for invasion of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and confrontation with it.

The reality proves that a top-priority task for averting conflicts and disputes and achieving durable peace in the waters is to correctly set the boundary there.

Another lesson is that the dispute-torn waters should be turned into a peace zone until a new extension of the Military Demarcation Line is set there.

It is the common will of the Korean nation to set up peace waters to make the West Sea a sea of national prosperity, not one of confrontation between fellow countrymen.

The historic declaration of 4 October on which the north and the south agreed reflected this will.

This declaration stipulated the principled matters for putting an end to the relations of military hostility, defusing tension and ensuring peace in the Korean Peninsula. In particular, it provided the best way for setting up the special zone for peace and cooperation in the West Sea and fixing a joint fishing zone and peace waters.

Both sides held the second defence ministerial talks and general-level military talks for the implementation of the 4 October declaration, at which they agreed to take practical measures to prevent conflicts and secure peace in the West Sea.

The army and people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea put forward realistic and principled proposals to implement this agreement.

They included landmark proposals calling on both sides to give up all their assertions with a broad mind, handle the West Sea conflict on the basis of the already existing north-south agreements, the Armistice Agreement and the demands of internationally accepted laws, until a new military demarcation line is set in the West Sea of Korea, and fix the peace waters and joint fishing zone.

However, the south Korean group of traitors scrapped valuable agreements of the Korean nation. As a result, the seed of conflicts and disputes still remains in the waters, becoming a potential flashpoint for an all-out war.

From the outset it paid no heed to the lessons of past West Sea incidents and the principled ways for solving them put forward by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It only worked with bloodshot eyes to maintain the illegal "northern limit line" and ignite a war against the north.

Past history shows that, if the south Korean authorities truly hope for peace in the Korean Peninsula, they should give up their stand of preserving the "northern limit line" and set a new extension of the Military Demarcation Line in the West Sea of Korea. And it shows that they should buckle down to putting into practice the proposal for setting the special zone for peace and cooperation in the West Sea advanced by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea till the new extension of the Military Demarcation Line is set. It also proved that those opposed to this are precisely harassers of peace and provocateurs of war.

There is a saying that the past is the "lamp" lighting the present and future.

It is self-evident that if the north and the south do not pull themselves out of the mire of confrontation, sticking to the inglorious past, they can never pave a wide avenue of peace and prosperity, much less achieve peace and stability in the peninsula.

Whoever truly wants improved north-south relations and values peace in the peninsula, whether they live in the north, the south or abroad, should not call into question the *Cheonan* case and the Yonphyong Island shelling any longer nor put them up as any precondition.

Explicitly speaking, the *Cheonan* case has nothing to do with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is the immutable truth.

The Yonphyong Island shelling would not have occurred if the south Korean group of traitors had not pre-empted shelling in the waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea side.

For over six decades since the division of Korea, the army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has never taken any physical countermeasure against all forms of shelling drills staged in the areas and waters of south Korea.

If the group of traitors tries to link the *Cheonan* case with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a far-fetched way and shift the blame for the Yonphyong Island shelling on to it while turning blind eyes to this stark reality, this will only prove that the group seeks only escalated confrontation with fellow countrymen and deteriorated north-south relations.

The army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea proposed "halting military actions which can be recognized as provocation of the other party" as an agenda of the recent preliminary talks for the opening of the north-south high-level military talks. This was prompted by the steadfast will to tide over the present developments in a fair and above-board way at an early date, the developments which resulted from the distrust and antagonism pent up between the north and the south for a long period.

The recent north-south military dialogue was held with much effort amid the great concern and expectation of the people at home and abroad. The south Korean group of traitors, however, persisted in peddling the two cases there because it sought confrontation and war, not dialogue and peace. As a result, the talks naturally came to a rupture.

It is too natural that broad strata of south Korea are becoming increasingly concerned and worried that if the present authorities turn their back on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's proposal for unconditioned dialogue and rush headlong into one-sided confrontation, calling into question the two incidents, this will entail miserable consequences of swamping the whole land of south Korea as the *Cheonan* warship and turning it into a wormwood field like Yonphyong Island.

But the group of traitors prolonging their remaining days through sycophancy towards the United States and escalated confrontation with fellow countrymen is working hard to find a way out in keeping the phase of confrontation under the pretext of the two cases.

The further the United States imperialists and the south Korean group of traitors "blame" the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the two cases, the more saliently it will reveal their ugly colours as anti-Democratic People's Republic of Korea confrontational fanatics and their effrontery of confusing right and wrong.

The army and people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue doing their utmost to shatter the vicious moves of the worst confrontational elements in the world, improve north-south relations and ensure the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula.